

REMARKS

In response to an Office Action mailed on December 3, 2004, Applicant respectfully requests that the above-listed Amendments be entered and the Application be reconsidered in light of the following Remarks. Claims 4-7, 12-14, 16-21, 23-24, 33-41 and 43 are amended. Claims 15, 42 and 44-47 are canceled. Claims 1-3, 8-11, 22, 25-32 were previously canceled. Claims 48-62 are new. Claims 48 and 54 are independent, and the remaining claims depend directly or indirectly from claim 48 or 54.

Fig. 1 is amended to show a plurality of data outlets 10 connected to a data infrastructure 12. Support for a plurality of data outlets connected to the data infrastructure is provided in the specification, at least in the paragraph that begins on page 4, line 6. For example, "... the premises equipment 12 may include interfaces to one or more additional data outlets..." Two paragraphs of the specification are amended to make the description conform to the amended Fig. 1. No new matter is added.

The Examiner rejected claims 15, 4-7, 12, 13 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over US Pat. No. 6,167,120 to Kikinis ("Kikinis") in view of US Pat. No. 6,012,951 to Krawez, *et al.* ("Krawez") or US Pat. No. 5,807,139 to Volansky, *et al.* ("Volansky").

Kikinis discloses apparatus and methods in which existing home or office wiring is used to distribute signals between a home server unit 100 or a micro-PBX 301 and various equipment, such as a telephone 144 or 309, a fax 141 or 307, or a PC 130 or 310. (Abstract; column 4, lines 8-11; column 6, line 65 to column 7, line 1; and Figs. 1 and 3.) Kikinis discloses using converters (also refer to as "adapter boxes") to connect certain equipment to the house wiring. For example, Kikinis discloses an adapter box 305a for connecting a fax machine 307 to house wiring 302c. Kikinis also discloses a converter box 305b for connecting a telephone 309 to house wiring 302b. (Column 7, lines 18-32; and Fig. 3.) These converter boxes 305a and 305b "are adapted for mounting to existing telephone jack outlets presenting a new outlet for connecting to the specific device." (Column 7, lines 33-36, emphasis added.) However, Kikinis discloses that in the case of a personal computer (PC) 310, the conversion is accomplished in an expansion card compatible with any expansion slot in the computer. (Column 7, lines 38-40, emphasis added.) Thus, the PC 310 connects directly to

the house wiring 302b (Fig. 3), by plugging the PC directly into a telephone jack. (Column 8, lines 31-33 and lines 55-61; and Fig. 4)

Krawez discloses an in-line, high-frequency filter for a telephone plug/jack combination that can be used to prevent DSL signals from being degraded by the capacitance of telephone, fax, etc. devices. Krawez's device includes inductors to block high-frequency signals, but no other electronic components.

Volansky discloses a surface mounted multimedia outlet. Volansky's device includes no electronic components.

In contrast, a decentralized computer network that includes a plurality of communication outlets, as described in the present Application, can be used to connect a data device (such as a computer) to a premises data infrastructure, such as existing house wiring or a wireless network. Such a communications outlet can be mounted in an outlet box, a wall or an electrical wiring raceway to provide a convenient way for a user to connect (for example) the computer to the data infrastructure. The data infrastructure is used to connect the data device(s) to premises equipment, such as other communications outlets, a LAN, a print server, etc. Thus, even if, *arguendo*, Kikinis's multimedia distribution system is analogized to a portion of the recited communication outlet, Kikinis's home service unit 100 or micro-PBX 301 is connected to the opposite end of the house wiring from user devices than the recited communications outlet. Furthermore, it is believed that none of the cited art discloses key elements of the claimed invention.

Independent claim 48 recites a plurality of communication outlets, each configured for attachment to at least one of an outlet box, an opening of a wall and an electrical wiring raceway. Furthermore, each communication outlet includes a bridge. (Emphasis added.) None of the cited art discloses or suggests a bridge within a communication outlet for providing a network connection between a plurality of data interfaces and a data infrastructure. Krawez and Volansky do not disclose any bridge. The only disclosures in Kikinis of devices capable of establishing connections to computers are the micro-PBX 301 and the hub chip 103 in the home service unit 100. (See Figs. 1 and 3.) However, both these devices are on the opposite end of the house wiring from the computer. Thus, these devices cannot provide a network connection between the plurality of data interfaces in the data infrastructure, as recited in independent claim 48.

The Examiner rejected claims 15-17, 20, 21, 20 3-24, 33, 34 and 37-47 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over US Pat. No. 6,714,534 to Gerszberg, *et al.* ("Gerszberg") in view of Krawez or Volansky. Gerszberg discloses a system for increasing bandwidth and the number of simultaneous services that can be transmitted over a single twisted-pair to customer premises equipment from a central office. (Abstract.) Gerszberg discloses an intelligence services director (ISD) 22 that may be coupled to a central office 34 via a twisted-pair wire, hybrid fiber interconnection, or other customer connection 30. (Column 6, lines 28-31.) The central office 34 preferably includes a facilities management platform (FMP) 32 for processing data exchanged across the customer connection 30. (Column 6, lines 37-40.) Customer premises equipment may individually or collectively serve as a local network at the customer site. (Column 7, lines 14-16.) Gerszberg discloses connecting this customer premises equipment to the ISD 22 via twisted-pair wires, fiber or wireless connection (presumably existing house wiring, etc.). However, Gerszberg does not disclose or suggest a bridge within each communication outlet, as recited in independent claim 48.

None of the art of record, either individually or in combination, is believed to disclose or suggest a decentralized computer network that includes a data infrastructure and a plurality of communication outlets, each of the communication outlets comprising a bridge, wherein each outlet is configured for attachment to at least one often outlet box, an opening in a wall and an electrical wiring raceway, as recited in independent claim 48. Thus, claim 48 is believed to be allowable. The claims directly or indirectly depend from claim 48 are also believed to be allowable, for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 48.

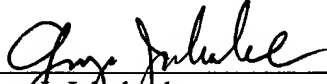
New claim 54 recites a method for providing network access over existing premises wiring to a data infrastructure. Claim 54 recites providing a plurality of communication outlets, each including a bridge. Claim 54 also recites attaching each of the communication outlets to a respective outlet box, opening in a wall or an electrical wiring raceway, and electrically connecting the bridge of each communication outlet to the existing premises wiring. None of the art of record, either individually or in combination, is believed to disclose or suggest such a method.

For all the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the present Application is in a condition for allowance, and such action is earnestly solicited. The Examiner is encouraged to

telephone the undersigned attorney to discuss any matter that would expedite allowance of the present Application.

Respectfully submitted,

JAMES S. HISCOCK, *ET AL.*

By: 
George J. Jakobsche
Registration No. 39,236
Attorney for Applicant(s)

WEINGARTEN, SCHURGIN,
GAGNEBIN & LEOVICI LLP
Ten Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109
Telephone: (617) 542-2290
Telecopier: (617) 451-0313

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AMENDMENT TO THE DRAWINGS

Please amend Fig. 1 according to the attached replacement drawing.